



# Amesbury Public Schools



*“Where children come first”*

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**Report of Entry Findings  
Gary S. Reese, Ed.D.  
Superintendent  
January 19, 2016**

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## **Mission of the Amesbury Public Schools**

*The Amesbury School District is unconditionally committed to every child, ensuring that all students experience success through the development of attitudes and skills necessary for lifelong learning by providing the highest quality staff, meaningful learning experiences, and a vitally involved community.*



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# Preface

For the past four months, I have spent a significant amount of time learning about the district through an entry plan process which was approved by the Amesbury School Committee in September 2015. The purpose of the entry plan was to identify for the school committee the ways in which I would acclimate myself to the community and better understand and appreciate the district's culture and values, while at the same time developing insight into the educational landscape in the community of Amesbury.



This entry plan process enabled me to “count, see and hear” data through the careful analysis of multiple sources of data, including:

- Interviews and conversations with students, parents, teachers and community members
- A review of key documents, including audits and district reviews completed in recent years
- Observations in schools and classrooms
- Attendance at school and community events
- Analysis of data, including student performance data, financial reports, and educator statistics

Once all this data had been collected, I reviewed the data to uncover themes and patterns that emerged through a process called ‘triangulation’ of data. Those core findings are included in this entry report and will be used as a vehicle to help drive the district’s strategic planning process, which will identify the goals and benchmarks for the district for the next 3-5 years.

I want to thank the School Committee, the administration, staff, parents and students for their support and thoughtful reflection about our district. Being provided with the gift of time to acclimate myself to the school district has truly been a rewarding opportunity. I have learned much about the context and history of the community of Amesbury which will better enable me to lead the improvement efforts in the district. This transition has afforded me the opportunity to build relationships and trust with various constituents in the schools and community, while at the same time providing the community an opportunity to learn about me and my core values which center around the concept of ‘Every child, every class, every day’.

I look forward to many productive years of work in the community of Amesbury.

Sincerely,

Gary S. Reese, Ed.D.  
Superintendent



## **Background of Entry Process**

The purpose and goals of an entry plan are to develop a deep understanding of the school district in order to distinguish the necessary conditions to achieve educational excellence. This process has provided the opportunity to identify what is working well within the district, areas for potential improvement, as well as those areas requiring further reflection and analysis. It is not a critique of past administration or work done within the district, but rather a reflection of the current conditions in the school district and the present educational landscape which may influence the district.

The following series of questions guided my interviews and focus group discussions:

- What is your background/role in the district/community?
- What are the areas that you would highlight as sources of pride for our schools?
- What are the areas that you feel present opportunities for our schools to grow and improve?
- What is your vision for our district over the next 3-5 years... in 3-5 years, what are the tangible outcomes that you expect for our students?
- What are the most effective means for communicating what is happening in our schools?
- What are your expectations of me as the new superintendent?
- What traditions, values, and outcomes are non-negotiable and must be sustained at all costs as we work towards improving student learning opportunities?
- Is there anyone else that you think I should be talking with to learn more about the schools and the community?

While these questions served as a framework for interviews, they did not limit the discussion and were often adjusted according to both the particular role of the person being interviewed as well as to enhance the conversation based on themes that were emerging.

Both the information gleaned through the interviews as well as the observations in the classrooms, schools and community resulted in qualitative data, descriptive information which cannot be expressed numerically, such as perception and beliefs. While gathering this information, extensive notes were taken and analyzed to uncover the themes contained in this report.

Quantitative data, which can be measured and expressed numerically, was also analyzed as part of the entry plan process. This data includes information such as attendance and graduation rates, academic performance results, and financial budgetary information.

A number of documents were reviewed and analyzed during this process, which yielded both quantitative and qualitative data. These documents included:

- Accountability data
- Assessment data (MCAS, SAT, etc)
- Budget and other financial documents
- Collective bargaining agreements
- DESE data, including student achievement, early warning indicator system (EWIS), student demographics, and District Analysis and Review Tool (DART) reports
- District Analysis and Review Tools (DART) Data (which provide comparative data for like communities)

- District and School Achievement Plans
- External audit and review reports, including:
  - DESE District Review – November 2014
  - Districtwide Special Education Program Evaluation (Walker Partnerships) – Winter 2014
  - MASBO Financial Operations Review
- Outcomes of Community Forum from spring 2015
- School Committee policy manual, agenda and meeting minutes
- School Profile Data: Attendance rates, graduation rates, enrollment data and demographics, educator evaluation and retention
- Special Education and ELL data, including records, percentage of students being served through our programs, both in terms of profile of those students and the breakdown of in- versus out- of district placements
- Student Handbooks

The format of the report is organized into the following sections:

- I. Teaching and Learning
- II. Fiscal and Asset Management
- III. Community Engagement and Communication
- IV. Professional Culture

## School Demographics

The chart below highlights the changing demographics in the schools in Amesbury. There has been a decrease of approximately 200 students every five years over the last fifteen years. At the same time, the school community has become more diverse, with steady increases in almost all ethnicities. Further, the low income population has increased by over 65% between 2000 and 2015 and students being provided support through special education has increased by 42% over the last fifteen years. The district has also seen an increase every five years in the number of students for whom English is not their first language and require support to develop proficiency in English. Our core mission is centered on students – understanding the changing demographics helps to frame out the needs of our community.

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2015</u>
<b>Overall Enrollment</b>	2,832	2,613	2,424	2,280
<b>Males</b>	1,428	1,329	1,284	1,202
<b>Females</b>	1,404	1,284	1,140	1,078
<b>African American</b>	.9%	1.5%	.8%	3.1%
<b>Asian</b>	0.4%	0.8%	0.7%	1.0%
<b>Hispanic</b>	0.7%	1.9%	3.9%	4.8%
<b>Native American</b>	0.1%	0.3%	0.1%	0.1%
<b>White</b>	97.9%	95.4%	92.4%	87.9%
<b>Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander</b>			0.1%	0.1%
<b>Multi-Race, Non Hispanic</b>			2.0%	3.0%
<b>Special Education</b>	13.9%	16.1%	15.8%	19.7%
<b>Low Income</b>	15.9%	13.4%	21.2%	26.3%
<b>High Needs</b>				32.3%
<b>ELL</b>	.2%	1.4%	.9%	1.5%

SOURCE: MA DESE, 2015

## **Teaching and Learning**

Teaching and Learning provides an indication of how the district is performing academically. Analysis in this area involves both quantitative data (such as standardized test scores, post-secondary performance, etc.) as well as qualitative data which was obtained through classroom observations as well as discussions with students, parents, educators, and community members.

### **Strengths**

Amesbury Public Schools has a strong academic program. The district consistently performs higher than the state averages on indicators such as MCAS (Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System) and SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test). On the ELA MCAS, the district has averaged 5% higher scores than the state average for the past five years. In the area of math, the district has averaged 3% higher scores than the state average for the past five years. The science results demonstrate the most significant difference as compared with state scores. Averaging 8% higher than state scores over the past five years. When compared with our comparable districts (districts that the state has identified as being similar in size and demographic data, our MCAS scores are equivalent.

In addition, on the SAT testing, the district has experienced steady growth in performance of our students over the past five years, with significant growth on the math and writing subtests, as compared with the state average which has been more flat. In the area of Reading, scores have steadily grown from an average of 516 in 2011 to an average score of 544 in 2015. This growth is comparable to the state average trend line. Similarly, math average scores have grown from an average of 524 in 2011 to an average score of 545 in 2015. The state average in math has remained steady at around an average of 520. Writing scores have increased from an average of 513 in 2011 to an average score in 2015 of 542. Similar to the math subtest, the writing scores for the state have remained consistent over the past five years, averaging at a score of approximately 500.

While the number of test takers on the Advanced Placement assessment has remained steady over the past five years (approximately 80 students annually), the total number of tests taken by our students has increased (from 96 tests in 2010-2011 to 121 tests taken in 2014-2015). In addition, the district has had significant steady growth in the percentage of students achieving a passing score of 3 or higher over the past five years. During the 2010-2011 school year, 69.2% of the students received a passing score; during the 2014-2015 school year, 87.7% of the students achieved a passing score of 3 or higher on the Advanced Placement tests. This level of growth is particularly significant as the state has experienced a decline in the percentage of students achieving a passing score of 3 or higher on the AP tests (decreasing from 73% in 2011 to 71% in 2015); globally, student performance has been stagnant over the past five years (average percentage of students achieving a score of 3 or higher is 61% over the past five years). The district has offered the same six advanced placement courses over the past five years: Biology, Calculus, English Literature/Composition, History, Statistics and Studio Art.

Amesbury High School students are completing their studies, which align with MassCore (Massachusetts Recommended High School Core Program of Studies), at a higher rate than students across the state, with the exception of 2012. The district has seen a steady increase in the percentage of students that are completing their studies within 4 years, increasing from 82.5% in 2011 to 89.4% in 2014. Students at the high school also have



the opportunity to participate in Early College High School coursework which enables them to earn college credit for courses taken while at Amesbury High School. This has been accomplished through a long-standing and valued relationship with Northern Essex Community College. Currently, students can begin earning college credit in their sophomore school year by taking a literature (LIT201) and a history course (HIS101). In their junior year, students have the option of four different course offerings: Literature (LIT202), History (HIS102), Sociology (SOC101), and Art (ART106). In their senior year, students may take English (ENG101). Participation in the Early College High School program serves a dual purpose. First, it provides the students with opportunities to earn college credits prior to entering a post-secondary school experience. Secondly, it helps prepare students for the rigor and expectations of college and promotes increased chances of success after high school.

Each year, the state recognizes our top performing students on the MCAS with the John and Abigail Adams Scholarship. This scholarship provides a tuition waiver at a Massachusetts state college or university. In order to be eligible for the scholarship, students must have scored *Advanced* and *Proficient* on grade 10 MCAS tests in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics (at least one score must be *Advanced*); and, have combined scores on MCAS ELA and Mathematics tests that place them in the top 25 percent of students in the graduating class in their district. For the Class of 2016, forty-four students received this recognition.

Academic readiness is also indicative in post-secondary outcomes data available through the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Over the past four years (Class of 2011 – Class of 2014), approximately 80% of our high school graduates have continued their education. There has not been a consistent pattern in terms of whether the students have completed their programs in state or out of state; nor has there been a strong preference towards either two- or four- year schools. What is significant is the student's persistence between completing their first year of college and continuing for a second year. Students are successful in continuing their post-secondary education between the first year and second year of college. This is indicative of a strong foundation of academic instruction and school readiness.

Academic strengths were also identified in other sources of data such as classroom observations and conversations with students, parents and teachers. One of the activities during my entry phase was to meet with the high school student council. In preparation for this meeting, 55 student council members met in small groups to discuss the strengths and needs of the school. The students compiled their data and approximately 20 of



the students met with me to share out their feelings. The most prominent feature identified by the students was a sense of pride in their school and community, both in terms of academics and extra-curricular activities. The High School offers 22 different clubs and 22 different athletic opportunities for students. During the 2014-2015

school year, 590 students participated in sports over the three seasons and 605 students participated in clubs. At the middle school, 200 students participated in clubs in 2014-2015 and 247 students are participating in clubs during the current school year. The students felt well prepared to continue their education beyond high school and indicated that the school district had provided them with the experiences and tools to promote success beyond high school.

Another common theme that emerged in relation to the teaching and learning opportunities in the district was the strength of our staff, particularly the ways in which our teachers went above and beyond to support our students and families. When identifying strengths, ‘teachers’ was consistently the initial response, whether it be from parents, students, or teachers. When reviewing state data, 100% of our teachers are licensed and teaching in the area of their certification, which means that our students are being instructed in their content areas by individuals that possess both the pedagogy (knowledge of teaching strategy) and content knowledge to support student learning.

Classroom observations suggest that teachers are using multiple approaches, based in research, to instruct students. Frequently, students were seen working in small groups collaborating to discover the answer to a problem or to discuss their thinking. This promotes twenty-first century thinking skills. The level of rigor in a number of classes was also evident. Teachers were observed asking students to expand on their responses and to explain their thinking. The concepts and skills being presented in class align with the most current Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

In addition to state and national testing, the district has employed a variety of strategies to provide formative (to inform instructional practices) and summative (to assess student outcomes) assessment practices. Teachers were observed utilizing a variety of formative practices to quickly gauge student understanding of concepts. Using this information, it was noticed that the teachers would adjust their instruction to remediate any misunderstandings. One assessment practice that is used in the district (in the elementary and middle schools) is the use of MAP testing (Measure of Academic Progress). This tool is being used both as a formative and summative measure.

### **Challenges facing Teaching and Learning**

Students, teachers, parents and the community express concerns about programmatic cuts over the past ten – fifteen years. Programs at the high school, including technology courses, have been cut in recent years. At the middle school level, exploratory programs have been decreased as a result of budgetary cuts. Cuts at the middle school level have completely eliminated home economic course offerings and limited foreign language offerings. The foreign language cuts at the middle school level has impacted students’ abilities to access higher level course offerings as they enter the high school.

An additional concern was expressed regarding the level of rigor of courses at the high school, particularly in relation to advanced placement course offerings. While the district has experienced a quantitative increase in the number of students receiving a passing score on AP exams, there is a general sense from students and parents that enrollment in the courses should be more challenging.

Curriculum materials and resources present additional challenges. As the state has adopted new curriculum frameworks in math and English language arts within the past few years, new materials have not been adopted to reflect the changing curriculum. Limited common planning time has also impacted the district's ability to develop curriculum documents and to ensure vertical alignment of curriculum. This challenge has also been influenced by the fact that the district does not have any teacher leaders or department heads who can facilitate a curriculum review process within each content area. The director of teaching and learning has instituted some curriculum committees to support this effort, but participation on these committees has been limited.

The percentage of students receiving special education services has been an ongoing area of concern for the district and community, particularly given the rising costs associated with meeting the needs of students receiving special education instruction, both within the district and for students placed in specialized out of district programs. While the percentage of students receiving special education services has remained relatively constant over the past five years (approximate average over the past five years for Amesbury is 20%), this average is higher than the state average (by approximately 3%), the averages of comparable (DART) districts and the averages of neighboring communities. Further, Amesbury has a higher percentage of students (aged 6-21) provided services in an out of district placement than state averages. For 2014, 7.6% of Amesbury students receiving special education students received services in out of district placements, as compared to 6.8% of students across Massachusetts.

While MCAS scores have consistently been above the state averages, performance has been flat in the area of English language arts and a decline in performance has been noted from 2013 test results to performance in 2014 and 2015. In the area of science/technology, with the exception of 2014, there has been a steady decline in the percentage of students receiving a score of proficient or higher.

While overall retention of staff in Amesbury has been a strength, this school year the district will experience some staffing changes in critical positions. The high school principal has announced his retirement at the end of the 2015-2016 school year. In addition, the Director of Student Services resigned from his position in December 2015. An interim candidate was hired for this position through the remainder of the school year. Coupled with a new superintendent, it will be essential to hire skilled candidates for these two positions; it is important that the selected candidates not only possess the skills associated with each of their roles, but also have a strong understanding and appreciation for the needs of the school district and community. There may be opportunities to consider qualified internal candidates for promotion.

The 'new' educator evaluation system has been in place in Amesbury for a few years now. The district uses an online, web-based program for completing the evaluation process. Some concerns have been expressed about the functionality of the online program. Additional training and support is sought from staff. In addition, as the evaluation system continues to evolve, it will be essential for the district to implement the system with greater fidelity. This will include the identification and implementation of District Determined Measures (DDMs). At this time, a committee has been established to develop the DDMs for the district.

There is a general comfort level with providing core instruction to the students at all grade levels. However, concerns have been expressed regarding the implementation of Response to Intervention (RtI) or Tiered

Intervention models by all schools. There is limited staffing to support such implementation. Further, staff has not received training with regards to understanding either model. Limited time has also been cited as a factor which interferes with teachers' abilities to develop an implementation plan.

## **Fiscal and Asset Management**

Fiscal and Asset Management provides an indication of the financial conditions of the district in relation to the impact on student learning. This area also examines assets, such as educational equipment and facilities.

### ***Strengths***

Over the past fifteen years, the community has spent more on education (actual net school spending) than is required by the state (required net school spending). In fiscal year 2000, the required net school spending as identified by the state was \$18,398,802. The actual net school spending for that year was \$19,020,122. The community spent 3.4% in excess of the net school spending for 2000. In fiscal year 2015, the required net school spending for the community of Amesbury was \$23,518,242, yet the district's actual net school spending equaled \$29,695,903. In this fiscal year, the community spent 26.3% above the required net school spending amount. The actual school spending has increased each year over the past fifteen years, with increases of approximately 15% every five years since 2000. As compared with the state average and neighboring communities, Amesbury has consistently spent a higher percentage above the required net spending compared to the state average and all neighboring communities, with the exception of Newburyport.



Activities from the Amesbury Public Schools are supported through a number of grants and foundations, including the the Amesbury Education Foundation, Newburyport Five Cents Savings Bank and the Richard Eaton Charitable fund. The Amesbury Education Foundation, Inc (AEFI) is a local organization that supports innovative practices in our schools through substantial annual grant awards. Through funding and support from AEFI, the district has been able to provide students with opportunities for learning which extend beyond the traditional classroom environment.

Math on the Merrimack is a perfect example of one such program. The grant supported a collaboration with Lowell's Boat Shop where the students learn to apply trigonometry and calculus concepts to real world applications on the Merrimack River. Contributions from local foundations and organizations enable the district to support specialized programs, such as hands-on academic learning opportunities and support students' access to sports and clubs.

The Amesbury Public Schools is comprised of two elementary schools (pre-kindergarten – grade four), one middle school (grades five – eight), one high school (grades nine – twelve) and an innovation high school (grades nine – twelve). Most of the school buildings are newer or have been newly renovated within the last twenty years. The Cashman Elementary School is an open classroom concept building that was built in 1975 and renovated in 2001 as a result of concerns of mold and water leakage. M. Louise Charette is the principal of the building and receives administrative assistance from a teacher that splits time between instruction and administrative support. There are 502 students in grades pre-kindergarten through grade four. The school provides special education services to students in inclusive and pullout settings; additionally, the school houses



substantially separate programs for students with behavioral and cognitive limitations that require more intense support. The school also houses the elementary program for students with limited English proficiency.

The Amesbury Elementary School is an elementary school that provides instruction to students in pre-kindergarten through grade four. There are 433 students in the school. Walter Helliesen is the building principal and, like Cashman Elementary, there is a teacher that helps to provide part-time administrative support. The building was originally built in 1968 modular classrooms were added in 1995. Special education services are provided to exceptional learners in inclusive and pullout settings; the school houses substantially separate programs for students with behavioral challenges and for those students requiring more intense instruction due to a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder.

The Amesbury Middle School provides instruction to students in grades five through eight. Different grade-levels are located on different wings within the school as a way to keep the grades separate. Grade five has been located at the Amesbury Middle School since 1998. Fifth grade students were transitioned to the middle school in 1998 due to overcrowding in the elementary schools. The administration includes a principal, Michael Curry, and two assistant principals, Katrina Randall and Steven O'Connor. There are 724 students in the four grades in which the program serves. The physical building was originally built in 1955, with renovations to the buildings being made in 1967 and again in 1995. As with the elementary schools, the middle school has special education programs that serve students in inclusive and pullout settings and provides specialized programs in order to promote decreased need for servicing students through programs outside the school district. The middle school offers a variety of after school programs for students on a fee basis.

The Amesbury High School was originally built in 1968 and renovated in 2008. The school provides instruction to students in grades nine through twelve. There are 621 students in the school. The administration includes a principal, N. Roy Hamond and two academic deans, Elizabeth McAndrews and Glen Gearin. Ms. McAndrews focuses on curriculum, instruction and assessment in her dean role. She oversees the academic support grant for the district and coordinates the Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act services and plans. She also serves as the civil rights coordinator for the district and oversees compliance in that area. Mr. Gearin, in addition to his role as academic dean, serves as the district's director of athletics. The school provides special education programming and services, comparable to the middle school. In addition, services for students for whom English is not the primary language are also provided by a certified ELL teacher. Students have the opportunity to participate in a variety of clubs and activities, as well as a number of sports teams during the fall, winter and spring seasons. As with the middle school, there is a fee for both participation in activities and clubs, as well as for participation on sports teams. Over the past few years, the fees for participation in these programs have increased.

The Amesbury Innovation High School is a state-approved innovation high school which meets the learning needs of students in grades nine through twelve. These students have experienced challenges within the traditional academic setting and require both therapeutic and additional academic support in order to be successful in school. This program serves approximately 35 students across the four grades. School administration is overseen by Eryn Maguire, principal. The small student population allows for more individualized attention and student support. The program is currently located on a leased space from the All

Saints Anglican Church of Amesbury. Currently, the district is engaged in a month to month lease with the church. The current location has been put up for sale and the school is a tenant at will.

The district has strong connections with community service agencies, including the Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center and the Pettengill House. These agencies provide substantial support to the students of Amesbury and their families in the area of social/emotional development through providing programs and direct service delivery. These programs help increase the capacity of our students to come to school ready to learn.

As part of the budget process during the 2015-2016 school year, the district was able to provide an additional staff member at the two elementary schools, the middle school and the high school. These additional staff members were systematically identified through each school's improvement plan. In addition, with support from the Mayor, funds were made available to support the district's long-range technology plan. \$106,000 for technology capital improvements were made available through the City of Amesbury. These funds were used to improve the infrastructure in the district as well as to provide Chromebooks at the elementary schools, the middle school and the high school. The Amesbury Innovation High School received a grant through the Amesbury Rotary Club which supported the purchase of 40 chromebooks.

### ***Challenging facing Fiscal and Asset Management***

While the community has increased its contribution each year to the school budget at a rate that has steadily surpassed the required net school spending budget, the amount of money that is contributed to the community by the state for educational purposes has decreased over the past fifteen years. In 2000, the contribution by the state to Amesbury for educational funding was \$9,314,552. This represented 50.6% of the required net school spending. By 2015, the chapter 70 aid contribution by the state had decreased to \$8,807,407, a net reduction of \$507,145 from the contribution made by the state in 2000. The required net school spending in 2015 increased to \$23,518,242. As a result, the chapter 70 contribution from the state only accounted for 27.4% of the required net school spending as calculated by the state. This has placed an additional burden on the community to meet and surpass state required net school spending obligations. Members of the community express concerns about the community's ability to continue to support increases the school budget which represents such a large percentage of the city's overall budget.

Out of district special education placements has also been an area of concern. While the number of out of district placements decreased over a five year period (36 students in 2010 to 30 students in 2014); the costs associated with these placements has remained steady. Further, the state has not adequately funded Circuit Breaker, which provides financial support for extraordinary costs associated with both out of district placements and in district placements that require substantial financial obligations. During the last three years, there has been a decrease in the reimbursement rate (75% in FY2014, 73.5% in FY2015, and 73% in FY2016).

This financial burden has resulted in elimination and/or reduction in programs over the past fifteen years. It appears that staffing and programmatic decisions in the past years may have been driven by financial constraints as opposed to determining what is educationally appropriate. For example, when some staff members have retired or resigned, those positions have not been filled, resulting in elimination of programs and increases in class sizes that may have otherwise been deemed critical to a comprehensive educational program.

Fees for services are challenging for families to meet. While the district does provide accommodations for families who receive free/reduced lunch, many families commented that the fees (for bussing, athletics and activities) have become exhorbant and are unreasonable. In addition, students and parents have communicated that, at times, they have had to prioritize participation in athletic activities as a result of not being able to pay the fee across multiple seasons. Further, families have communicated to the central office that they are unable to pay the full transportation fee for bussing and have requested fee reductions and/or payment plans. The district has been able to establish payment plans for a number of families.

The district has experienced an increase in the number of students experiencing trauma and requiring social/emotional support. While the district benefits from strong relationships with community service agencies such as Pettengill House, Our Neighbor's Table and the Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center, these programs require financial obligations which reduce the funding available to meet the instructional needs of students. Further, the district has limited internal capacity to meet the social/emotional needs of students. As new positions have been added during the 2015-2016 school year, the administration had to make decisions between funding positions that would provide academic support and reduce class size versus staffing supports to meet therapeutic student needs.

The administrative structure and support, both at the central office and school level, presents a challenge in meeting the range of needs within the district. At the central office level, there is a superintendent, assistant superintende for business and finance, a director of teaching and learning and a director of student services. Each of those individuals perform many tasks and coordinate programs and services that in many districts are performed by multiple individuals. For example, the assistant superintendent of business and finance also oversees facilities and transportation; the director of student services supports the special education program, ELL program, and nursing services. While Amesbury may be a smaller district, the rules, regulations, and reporting requirements remain the same regardless of district size; this presents additional burdens on those staff members and influences their ability to effectively respond to the range of responsibilities. At the school level, additional demands and expectations with regards to educator evaluation, along with the increased complexity of needs of students, has impacted principals' abilities to effectively lead the teaching and learning. This is particularly challenging at the elementary level where each school only has one full time administrator.

While the city has supported the investment in the district's long range capital plan for the 2015-2016 school year, there is a gap between the programs and technology equipment available for students and staff. It is not clear whether the city will continue to support the long range technology plan, which identifies infrastructure and equipment advancements over a five year period.

While the district has enjoyed updated facilities in most schools, limitations do exist with regards to facilities. First, although many of the buildings have been renovated within the past fifteen years, some of the buildings continue to experience challenges with regards to leaking which have been identified annually as capital improvement needs. Secondly, the Amesbury Innovation High School is operating on a leased site with a month to month lease. The school will need to find a permanent location that meets the instructional and programmatic needs of its students. For example, the current site is located in close proximity to the center of the city; this enables the students to access internships within the community. Additionally, the Amesbury

Elementary School is in need of either renovation or reconstruction due to limitations in the facility. As the need for specialized programs has increased (such as special education and English learning programs), the school lacks the capacity to support those programs. Further, the school has inadequate and inequitable spaces for programs such as music. The district has submitted a statement of interest to the Massachusetts School Building Authority to engage in a building project. As we move forward with this project, it will be important to consider the following needs:

- Spacing issues and limitations at both elementary schools
- The educational appropriateness of fifth grade students being located at the middle school with students in grades six through eight
- Increased needs for space for early childhood programming
- Equitable facilities and services to meet the needs of all students
- Technology advancements and limitations of technology as a result of current facilities

## **Community Engagement and Communication**

Family and community engagement provides an indication of the ways in which the school district outreaches to families of the Amesbury Public Schools as well as the community of Amesbury. This section includes an analysis of communication, both within the school and from the school district to families and the community.

### ***Strengths***

Each school takes multiple opportunities to participate in and collaborate with community organizations. For example, the schools take advantage of a positive relationship with the Senior Center, often performing songs and engaging in activities with the senior citizens in Amesbury. This year, students at Amesbury Elementary School participated in a learning activity with members of the senior center where the students conducted interviews of various senior citizens to learn about life when they were younger. This was an opportunity to students to learn about another time period, while at the same time developing their listening, speaking and writing skills. The project culminated in December with the students visiting the Senior Center, performing some holiday songs and playing bingo with their senior buddies.

The school district also appreciates its relationship with local community service agencies, such as the Pettengill House and the Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center. The Pettengill House provides support to our schools through its school-based links program. This program helps students to be able to access school more effectively by providing direct services to students and their families. During the 2014-2015 school year, the Pettengill House provided services to over 333 students and their families, including 54 students that were experiencing homelessness. The Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center provides programs for students in the elementary, middle and high schools to help students understand and avoid domestic violence situations. A particular focus of the programs from the Jeanne Geiger Crisis Center is to empower girls to make good decisions in dating situations. The school district also takes a leadership role in supporting community agencies such as Our Neighbor's Table. The schools frequently conduct food drives to support Our Neighbor's Table, which provides food and support for families in Amesbury that may be experiencing hunger.

The collaboration with Northern Essex Community College provides students with an opportunity to take college level courses while in high school. This provides the students with credits that can be transferred when entering college. It also provides the students with an appreciation of the level of rigor and expectations of college level courses and prepares them for meeting these expectations.

The school committee is highly committed and supportive of the efforts of the school administration. Many members have been on the school committee for a number of years which has provided stability and a strong historical perspective. Committee members are knowledgeable about state regulations and rules and stay current through their state association (Massachusetts Association of School Committees – MASC). Representatives from the committee attend conferences through MASC. New members complete the Charting the Course training for new school committee members provided through MASC.

Each of the schools produces regular 'polies' which provide families with weekly communication regarding happenings in the school. The high school produces a daily 'poly' and the elementary schools and middle



school provides the polies on a weekly basis on Wednesdays. This information is available online and families and community members can register their email addresses to receive this information regularly. The polies communicate about events within the school, as well as activities related to the district and community events. In addition to the polies, each school maintains and updates its website on a regular basis. During the 2015-2016 school year, all school, department and district websites were updated in order to improve communication.



The school district also has access to two other means of communicating with families. First, the district has access to email communications with families through the use of our student information software, Aspen. If a parent has provided an email address, it is input into the Aspen software. This allows the district to send email blasts out to families regarding various events and activities. It also enables teachers the opportunity to send out individual emails to parents regarding individual student issues or academic progress. All

staff members also have access to a school email address which parents and community members can access and locate through the district website. Parents and community members are able to search for email addresses by teacher name, subject area taught, department, and school. This increases the parents' capacity to communicate with staff members more effectively. Additionally, the district subscribes to a web-based mass communication system called Blackboard Connect. This system allows the schools and the district to communicate with families about events, activities, and school closings/delays.

This year, the central office has also increased the ways in which information is communicated out to families and the community. Each department in the central office (Special Education, Curriculum and Assessment, Business and Superintendent's office) updated their individual web pages which can be accessed through the main district page. The types of information communicated through each of these pages is more comprehensive than has been available in previous years. Information including presentations, budget reports and forms are available on the sites for the public to review. In addition, a weekly report is produced out of the superintendent's office which is posted on the website and provides the schools and community with an indication of the types of activities that are completed each week. Also available through the superintendent's office is a Facebook page and a twitter feed.

Community service is valued within the district. Each of the schools coordinates various activities throughout the year to encourage community service. In addition, the high school facilitates community service as a graduation requirement. Students are required to track their community service hours and complete a minimum of 75 hours of community service during their four years of high school. The district also sponsors clubs, such as Interact, which focus on the giving back to one's community, both locally and globally. As identified on the high school's website, the "overall objective for implementing mandatory community service as part of the graduation requirement centers around the development of character, self-esteem and leadership qualities attained, not only through academic achievement, but also through a contribution to one's community. We believe that community service involves service to one's school community as well as one's local, national and global communities."

### ***Challenges facing Community Engagement and Communication***

While the district has multiple ways to communicate with teachers, students, parents, and the community, concerns were expressed about the limited communication. The district may not be using all communication tools to their full potential. Further, the ways in which information is being communicated may not be the preferred method for parents. For example, the high school recently held an evening event for students that were transitioning from eighth to ninth grade in 2016. Information regarding this event was sent to families through the student information management system (Aspen), which sends out an email blast to identified families. Despite this communication that was sent to families, phone calls and emails were received from parents indicating that they were not aware of the program and were disappointed that they did not attend.

The district has also made significant improvements over the past few years in communicating the annual budget process. However, concerns continue to be expressed about the transparency of the process and with challenges understanding the budget format. Over the summer of 2015, a new financial software program (SoftWrite) was purchased and installed. This program was set up with accounts that were in greater alignment with the state accounting fund codes. The program also has the capacity to produce different reports. These reports are presented to the school committee monthly at the finance subcommittee meetings; finance subcommittee members have noted that the reports are easier to understand and allows them greater opportunity to monitor monthly expenditures and fund balances.

Past communication and collaboration between the school committee and city council has been somewhat strained. It was communicated that there was a level of mistrust between the two sets of elected officials. Further, it is perceived that there is a misunderstanding of roles and responsibilities of each of the groups and concerns were expressed regarding possible areas of overlap between responsibilities. This year, there has been interest in improving the relationship between the two groups and a joint education subcommittee with representatives from both organizations has been recommended; however, the group has not met as of yet and clear goals and expectations for the function of this subcommittee have not been identified.

## **Professional Culture**

Professional culture refers to the attitudes and beliefs that define the school district. A district that has a strong culture of learning, as defined by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in the educator evaluation rubric, is one in which all staff members are reflective about their practice, maintains high expectations for students and staff, and promotes continuous learning opportunities for staff members. Core values, the mission and vision of the district and schools are clearly understood and drive all decisions, both programmatically and fiscally. This belief system is shared systematically, beginning with the establishment of the values at the district level and then funneling down to the school and teacher level with values, mission and vision that are clearly aligned with the district. Further, professional culture is defined as a district that understands and appreciates cultural diversity and respects and fosters individual differences.

### ***Strengths***

One of the biggest strengths identified both through observation and through conversations with students, parents, and at the school-level is the dedication and commitment of the staff. The district has effectively retained its staff and school administration. For the past five years, the district has retained over 90% of its staff members, consistently remaining above the state retention rates averages. Much of the turnover each year has been a result of retirement, as opposed to educators either leaving the profession or transferring to a different school district. The staff is very committed to supporting student learning, as well as promoting social/emotional development of students. Educator evaluation data suggests that staff members are reflective about their teaching practices and make adjustments to their teaching approach as a result of student performance data and feedback from administration. Teachers often meet, during their prep times, before school and after school to discuss curriculum and student needs. These collaborative meetings happen within grade levels and departments, as well across subject areas and with special education staff.

School pride is a core component of the Amesbury Public Schools. It begins with the students and the respect they have for their school and community and extends out to the teaching staff, parents and community.

Students take pride in athletics, performing arts, but most importantly their academic performance. There are a variety of honor societies at the high school which recognize overall academic achievement and service, as well as achievement and accomplishments

within specific academic domains (which include honor societies specific to each core academic area). The high school holds spirit rallies throughout the year which allow students to demonstrate grade-level unity and appreciation of their classmates. During these rallies, grade-levels work together to participate in challenges, develop skits, and perform cheers. One of the most impressive aspects of the rallies is when the students



perform the ‘Oklahoma Clap’. This cheer is extraordinary, with the students sitting on the floor and, in sync, completing a series of floor tapping, hand clapping sequences. The administration at the high school even gets involved in the school spirit activities, with Mr. Hamond participating in the Oklahoma Clap at the most recent rally. One would only need to walk through the halls during passing time to identify the sea of ‘red’, with articles of clothing representing various Amesbury High School sports teams, as well as more generic Amesbury shirts. When interviewing the student council, another key aspect that was identified was the concept of all students being part of the school community. This is demonstrated through activities such as the bocce ball team, which was made up of students with significant disabilities as well as regular education students. The students came together to participate in bocce ball tournaments and games. This program is an example of students from different backgrounds and with diverse needs come together to participate in common activities. Diversity is also represented through the various club and activity offerings within the schools, including clubs such as Gay/Straight Alliance. This group has a foundation of acceptance and understanding.

The district and the schools have clearly defined mission statements. The mission is valued by members of the school and the community. For example, the mission is read by the school committee at the beginning of each meeting, as a reminder of the school’s purpose and as a driving force for making any educational decisions during the meeting. The mission of the high school is prominently displayed on the walls of the building. When preparing budgets, the schools and the district reflect on the mission and make budgetary recommendations that are in alignment with school goals and mission.

During observations within the classrooms, there were a number of examples of teachers fostering high expectations of their students. This was demonstrated through the ways in which they presented questions to the students, the type of questioning that promoted higher order thinking skills, and the type of assignments the students were asked to complete which were open-ended and required a conceptual understanding of the concepts. During the observations, there were examples of multi-disciplinary learning opportunities, which encourage students to demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which the topics they are learning cross subject areas.

The district utilizes an online program (MyLearningPlan OASYS) to promote professional development opportunities for staff and for the staff to track their professional development for relicensure purposes. In addition, the district has reactivated its professional development committee, which is tasked with assessing the professional development needs of the staff and developing a plan for implementation.

### ***Challenges facing Professional Culture***

Time for collaborative meetings and work is limited in the district. While the teachers utilize prep time, before school and after school to participate in these meetings, these preparatory times are also needed for lesson planning, assessment of student learning, parent communications, and preparation for upcoming classes. There is a discrepancy between available prep times across the district, which interferes with teachers’ ability to meet with each other, but also to meet with paraprofessionals that provide direct instruction and support to some of our students.

A challenge that was identified by students and staff members was the school mascot (the Amesbury Indians), and the potential negative connotations or racially-biased undertones of the mascot. This concern is evidenced through observation at sporting events, where some students will dress ‘like an Indian’ and dance around or chant in a manner that they perceive ‘an Indian’ might act. While some students and staff cite the mascot as an issue that must be addressed, other students view it as an opportunity for students to become more culturally aware and sensitive to individual differences.

While the district and schools have clearly defined mission statements, vision and core values need to be updated and revisited. The district does not have a current strategic plan which impacts the ability to make budgetary and programmatic decisions through the lens of long range goals. Lack of these documents also present challenges with establishing benchmarks for improvement and with developing sound district and school improvement plans.

Although there were many examples observed of teachers fostering high expectations from their students, there were also a number of instances observed of teacher led instruction without clearly articulated objectives and expectations of higher order thinking skills. This includes a variety of instances where staff were observed lecturing from the front of the room with limited student engagement or interaction or teaching from their desk. This inconsistency in instruction suggests the need for further professional development for staff in employing strategies that promote high expectations and professional development for administration in identifying and supporting effective teaching practices.

Professional development opportunities was an area of concern expressed by many staff members. The district faces the challenge that is not uncommon to many districts – the number of state required professional development trainings has consumed the time that the district has allotted for professional development. This includes bullying prevention training; special education rules, regulations and practices; restraint training; training on the educator evaluation system; civil rights regulations and practices; and school safety. As the state continues to add new required trainings (such as suicide awareness and prevention), this impedes the district’s ability to offer meaningful and ongoing professional development on academic concepts and skills.



## **Summary**

The findings illustrate that the Amesbury Public Schools has an overall strong academic program. We have capable students that complete their high school education prepared to meet the challenges of college and/or careers. We have committed staff members that often go above and beyond the expectations of a classroom teacher, both in terms of meeting the academic and social/emotional needs of our students. We have a community that is invested in improving our schools. The identified challenges will be used to help inform the development of a 3-5 year strategic plan for the district.

### ***Teaching and Learning***

- The district has many strengths in this area which are demonstrated by our performance on a variety of indicators (MCAS, AP, and SAT) where our students are performing above statewide averages. There are a number of clubs, activities and athletic programs for students to participate in. The staff is dedicated to supporting the needs of students and there is very little staff turnover each year.
- The challenging components within teaching and learning center around three key areas: maintaining high quality programs and course offerings despite budgetary challenges; ensuring that students are appropriately placed in special education programs and that there is not an over-identification of students in special education; implementing Response to Intervention (RtI) and Tiered Instruction models in order to provide ongoing support and interventions so that all students can make adequate progress.

### ***Fiscal and Asset Management***

- The city, over the past fifteen years, has consistently spent in excess of required net school spending requirements and has increased the percentage of contribution significantly. Many of the schools in Amesbury have been renovated in the past twenty years, providing students with increased opportunities to learn in current educational spaces and environments. During the 2015-2016 budget process, the school district was able to increase its staffing by providing an additional staff member at each of the elementary schools, the middle school and the high school. The specific positions were identified and selected based on needs articulated through each school's improvement plan.
- There are many challenges that were identified through this entry process in the area of fiscal and asset management. While the community continues to contribute above the required net spending requirements, the state has decreased its Chapter 70 contribution over the past fifteen years. Out of district special education costs have continued to rise contributing to the significant percentage of the school budget being related to special education service delivery (both in and out of district). Financial burdens have resulted in the decrease of programs and services over the year. This decrease has been particularly noticeable in the middle and high schools. Athletic, activity and bus fees continue to be a source of concern for parents. Technology improvements are needed within the district, both in terms of infrastructure, as well as student and teacher access to current technology. The district is experiencing space needs, both for its Innovation High School which is on a monthly at will lease with the church and

with the Amesbury Elementary School, which is challenged with inadequate spaces for services and inequitable access to technology.

### ***Community Engagement and Communication***

- The data suggests an active community, both in terms of parental involvement in the schools and its activities as well as a community that values excellent schools. The schools engage in many activities to support community agencies. The district has also established and values the relationship with local community service agencies to meet the needs of our students. The district participates in the Early College High School program which enables students to earn college credit while participating in classes offered at the high school. The school committee is knowledgeable and committed to high expectations for students. The school district has multiple modalities to communicate with families.
- While multiple methods of communication exist, there continues to be a need to review and improve communication methods. Specifically, the community wants increased communication (streamlined and accurate) and transparency with regards to topics such as budget development, program development, and school improvement.

### ***Professional Culture***

- The staff in the Amesbury Public Schools is committed to the students and community and are reflective about their teaching practices. Many teachers participate in small learning groups (within grades and subjects, as well as across departments) to examine instructional practices and student learning needs. School pride is evident across all settings and within the community. The district has a clearly defined mission statement that is used when making budgetary and programmatic decisions. The district has a system for monitoring and promoting professional development opportunities for staff.
- While teachers often collaborate about teaching and learning, limited time impacts their ability to engage in these types of conversations on an ongoing basis. Although a number of teachers structure lessons that promote high expectations of students, there are instances where this practice is limited and indicative of professional development needs. Extensive required DESE trainings have limited the district's ability to provide meaningful professional development for staff. The school mascot (the Amesbury Indians) is a source of pride for the school and community, but may have negative connotations which needs to be explored.

Despite all of these challenges, great things are happening in the Amesbury Public Schools, due in large part to the strength of the Amesbury Public Schools staff and the personal connections they make with students, promoting both academic and social/emotional development. Further, the district benefits from a community, that as a whole, supports the schools and the work we do every day with our students.



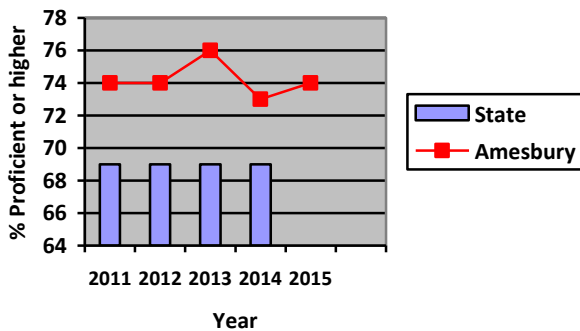
## Appendix A

### *Charts and Tables*

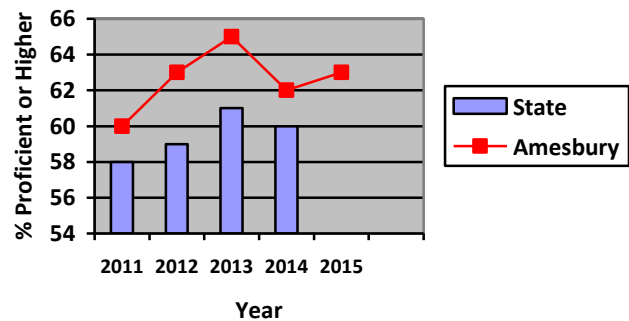
Data from the following charts and tables are referenced throughout this document. Much of the data comes from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (both information that is accessible to the general public and information found on secure locations on the DESE website). This information was obtained in December 2015 and represents the most current information available through DESE. For data that was not obtained through the DESE, the source of the information has been noted below the table or chart.

#### MCAS Performance - District

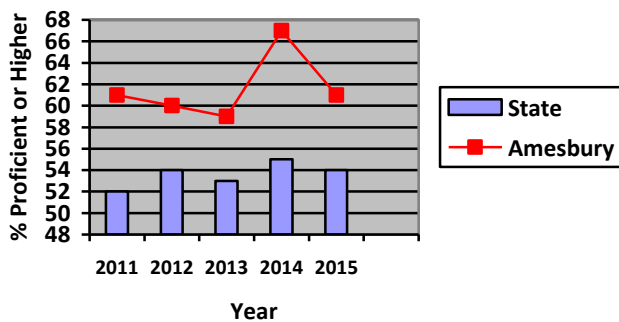
**ELA MCAS Comparison**



**Math MCAS Comparison**

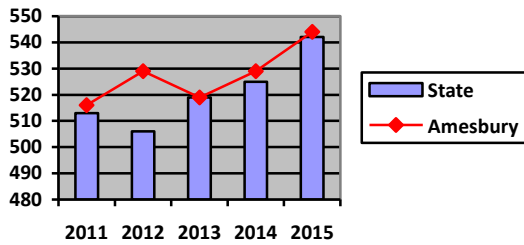


**Science MCAS Comparison**

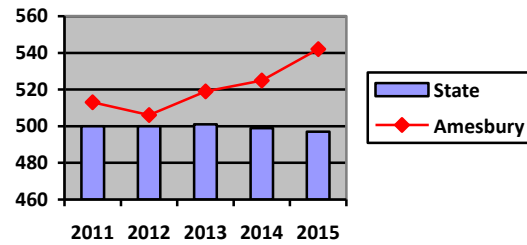


## SAT Performance

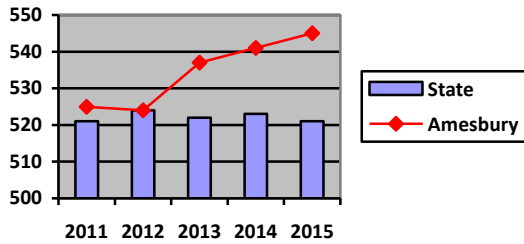
**Reading**



**Writing**



**Math**



## Advanced Placement Participation Report

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Test Takers</u>	<u>Tests Taken</u>	<u>One Test</u>	<u>Two Tests</u>	<u>Three Tests</u>	<u>Four Tests</u>	<u>Five Tests</u>
2010 – 2011	78	96	62	14	2	0	0
2011 – 2012	81	117	51	24	6	0	0
2012 – 2013	69	100	42	23	4	0	0
2013 – 2014	80	126	41	35	2	1	1
2014 – 2015	81	121	48	25	7	0	0

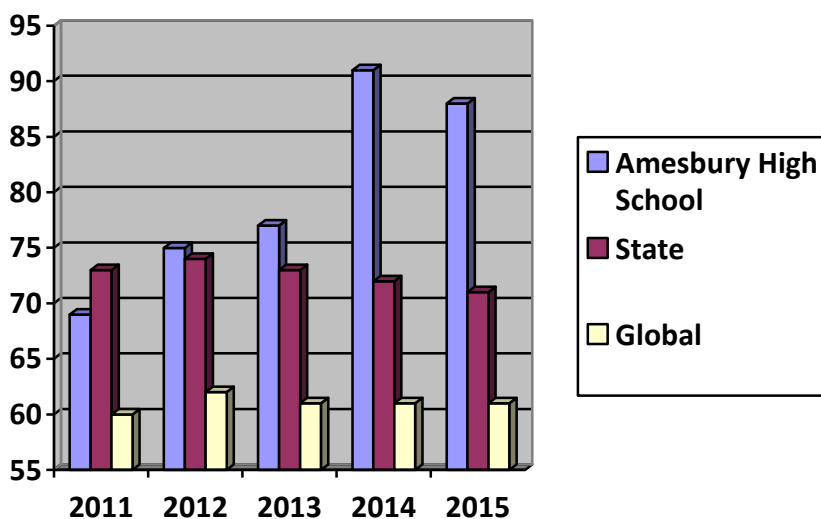
Source: The College Board, 2015

## Advanced Placement Performance Report

	2010-2011		2011-2012		2012-2013		2013-2014		2014-2015	
	Tests taken	% 3-5 score	Tests taken	% 3-5 score	Tests taken	% 3-5 score	Tests taken	% 3-5 score	Tests taken	% 3-5 score
Biology			30	70%			41	82.9%	23	87%
Calculus AB	21	90.5%	21	100%	14	100%	9	100%	25	88%
Calculus BC					2	100%	17	94.1%		
English Lang and Comp									1	100%
English Lit/Comp	29	62.1%	29	75.9%	21	66.7%	21	95.2%	21	100%
History: US	10	60%			21	76.2%			23	91.3%
Physics B					1	100%				
Physics C: Elec & Magn.							1	100%		
Physics C: Mechanics							1	100%		
Statistics	27	77.8%	31	67.7%	25	80%	28	85.7%	22	81.8%
Studio Art: 2D Design	9	55.6%	6	33.3%	16	56.3%	8	50%	6	66.7%
<b>ALL AP Exams</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>69.2%</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>75.3%</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>76.0%</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>91.3%</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>87.7%</b>

Source: The College Board, 2015

### Percentage of Students Scoring 3+



Source: The College Board, 2015



## Graduation Rate

	2011		2012		2013		2014	
	Amesbury	State	Amesbury	State	Amesbury	State	Amesbury	State
4 year	82.5	83.4	83.9	84.7	87.4	85.0	89.4	86.1
5 year	85.4	86.3	85.8	87.5	89.4	87.7		

## Post-Secondary Outcomes (According to Year of Graduation)

### Postsecondary Enrollment

	2011		2012		2013		2014	
	Amesbury	State	Amesbury	State	Amesbury	State	Amesbury	State
<b>Total Entering Post-Secondary</b>	<b>78.8</b>	<b>74.3</b>	<b>79.3</b>	<b>74.8</b>	<b>86.9</b>	<b>76.2</b>	<b>79.7</b>	<b>72.3</b>

### Postsecondary Enrollment by Institution Type

	2011		2012		2013		2014	
	Amesbury	State	Amesbury	State	Amesbury	State	Amesbury	State
<b>In State</b>	<b>74.8</b>	<b>71.2</b>	<b>69.2</b>	<b>71.4</b>	<b>73.1</b>	<b>70.9</b>	<b>58.5</b>	<b>69.4</b>
4-Yr Private	15.7	19.8	16.8	19.7	17.6	18.9	14.4	19.5
4-Yr Public	33.0	24.5	19.6	24.7	25.2	25.0	17.8	26.4
2-Yr Public	26.1	26.7	32.7	26.7	30.3	26.9	26.3	23.5
Other		0.2		0.2		0.1		
<b>Out of State</b>	<b>25.2</b>	<b>28.8</b>	<b>30.8</b>	<b>28.6</b>	<b>26.9</b>	<b>29.1</b>	<b>41.5</b>	<b>30.6</b>
4-Yr Private	12.2	17.7	13.1	17.4	11.8	17.4	13.6	18.1
4-Yr Public	11.3	10.1	15.0	10.1	11.8	10.6	27.1	11.6
2-Yr Private		0.1		0.1		0.1		
2-Yr Public	1.7	0.9	2.8	1.0	3.4	1.0		0.8

### First-to-Second Year Persistence by Institution Type

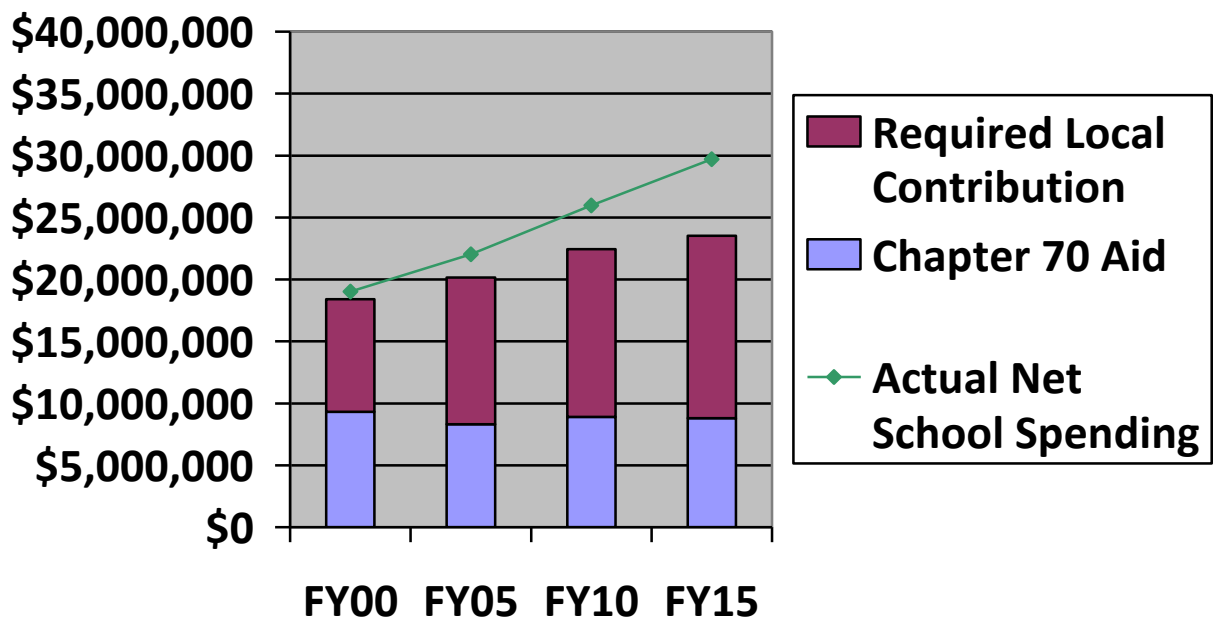
	2011		2012		2013		2014*	
<b>In State</b>	<b>86.0</b>	<b>81.6</b>	<b>83.8</b>	<b>82.8</b>	<b>86.2</b>	<b>79.1</b>		
4-Yr Private	83.3	92.3	94.4	92.7	95.2	90.8		
4-Yr Public	92.1	92.7	100	93.8	96.7	91.8		
2-Yr Private		57.1		100				
2-Yr Public	80.0	63.9	68.6	65.7	72.2	59.2		
Other		21.2		76.4				
<b>Out of State</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>92.9</b>	<b>93.9</b>	<b>93.3</b>	<b>87.5</b>	<b>90.7</b>		
4-Yr Private	100	93.8	92.9	94.7	78.6	91.9		
4-Yr Public	100	94.4	93.8	93.8	100	92.3		
2-Yr Private		62.5		71.4		63.6		
2-Yr Public		61.6		67.6		58.1		
Other		40.0				50.0		

\* Persistence data not yet available for students that graduated in 2014 from Amesbury High School

## Percentage of Students identified as Special Education

District	2011- 2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Amesbury	19.5%	19.0%	19.3%	19.7%	20.8%
<i>Comparable (DART) communities</i>					
Amherst-Pelham	20.5%	20.5%	20.0%	19.8%	20.8%
Ashburnham-Westminster	16.9%	17.3%	18.2%	17.6%	17.0%
Bellingham	14.3%	15.6%	16.2%	16.8%	18.6%
Dedham	22.3%	21.8%	20.7%	19.1%	19.3%
Falmouth	17.8%	18.1%	18.7%	19.1%	18.8%
Millbury	18.5%	17.9%	18.4%	17.8%	17.5%
Northampton	20.5%	20.3%	21.9%	23.1%	21.5%
Northbridge	16.4%	16.2%	17.1%	17.9%	17.4%
Southwick-Tolland-Granville	15.8%	15.8%	16.5%	18.5%	20.2%
<i>Neighboring Communities</i>					
Georgetown	13.6%	14.3%	14.7%	14.2%	13.3%
Newburyport	14.7%	14.7%	14.0%	12.4%	13.6%
Pentucket	17.8%	16.3%	16.7%	17.5%	17.8%
Triton	14.9%	15.8%	13.7%	14.7%	15.7%
State Average	17.0%	17.0%	17.0%	17.1%	17.2%

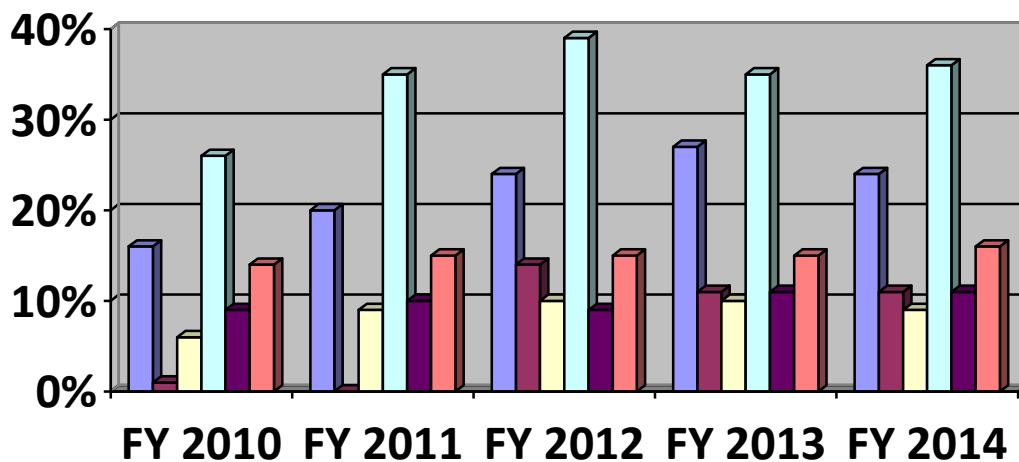
## Actual Spending to Required NSS Comparison



### Funding Trends (2000 – 2015)

	<b>FY 00</b>	<b>FY 05</b>	<b>FY 10</b>	<b>FY 15</b>
Chapter 70 Aid	\$9,314,552	\$8,322,927	\$8,897,607	\$8,807,407
Percent Change		-10.6%	+6.9%	-1.0%
Required Net School Spending	\$18,398,802	\$20,144,390	\$22,452,612	\$23,518,242
Percent Change		+9.5%	+11.5%	+4.7%
Actual School Spending	\$19,020,122	\$22,025,162	\$25,974,892	\$29,695,903
Percent Change		15.8%	17.9%	14.3%
Chapter 70 % of Actual NSS	49%	37.8%	34.3%	29.7%

### Percentage above Required NSS



***Charles C. Cashman Elementary School***

Year Built	1975 / renovation 2001
Population Served	PreK – grade 4
Number of Students	502
Administration	M. Louise Charette
Student / Teacher Ratio	14.8 to 1

***Amesbury Elementary School***

Year Built	1968 / temporary classrooms added 1995
Population Served	PreK – grade 4
Number of Students	433
Administrative Staff	Walter Helliesen
Student / Teacher Ratio	16.5 to 1

***Amesbury Middle School***

Year Built	1955 / renovations 1967, 1995
Population Served	Grades 5 – 8
Number of Students	724
Administrative Staff	Michael Curry, Principal Steve O'Connor, Assistant Kathy Randall, Assistant
Student / Teacher Ratio	13.7 to 1

***Amesbury High School***

Year Built	1968 / renovation 2008
Population Served	Grades 9 – 12
Number of Students	621
Administrative Staff	Roy Hamond, Principal Elizabeth McAndrews, Dean Glen Gearin, Dean
Student / Teacher Ratio	14.6 to 1

***Amesbury Innovation High School***

Year Built	N/A (leased property)
Population Served	Grades 9 – 12
Number of Students	36
Administrative Staff	Eryn Maguire
Student / Teacher Ratio	9 to 1

